

Use of Village Green by Martins Pond PH (v1.1)

Version control

V1.0 of this paper formed part of an Extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 6th September.

V1.1 includes some minor typographical corrections, the removal of some personal data retained in v1.0 in error, and the addition of further comments from members of the public.

1. Summary

There has been significant public comment over recent weeks about the bikers meets organised by Martins Pond on The Green over the summer. The purpose of this agenda item is to hear the views of residents and Martins Pond about the meets and to understand the issues surrounding the use of The Green prior to discussing a proposal from Martins Pond at the council meeting on 21st September.

It is unfortunately too simplistic to regard The Green as 'public space' with no constraints on its use. The Parish Council has obligations under both the conveyances by which the land was transferred to it and from legislation covering the use of Village Greens.

- Under the terms of covenants in the conveyances, the northern section of The Green can only be used for the benefit of the inhabitants of Potten End and the southern section can't have any alcohol sold or consumed without the approval of Martins Pond.
- As a 'Village Green', The Green can only be used use for enjoyment and recreation purposes whilst motorised vehicles cannot use any of it without the permission of the Parish Council.

Martins Pond has accepted that it should have asked for permission from the Parish Council to use The Green in advance of arranging the meets and has cancelled any further meets until agreement is reached with the Parish Council. Martins Pond is preparing a proposal which will be considered at the Council Meeting on 21st September to determine:

- a) whether the proposal is in contravention of any covenant in either of the conveyances,
and
- b) whether the proposal would interrupt the proper use of The Green for enjoyment and recreation,
if the proposal passes both of those tests then
- c) whether sufficient controls can be agreed to strike an acceptable balance between the needs of Martins Pond and local residents.

2. Ownership history

09/1933 – most of The Green was conveyed to the Parish Council of Great Berkhamstead Rural, the predecessor of Nettleden with Potten End Parish Council, (in red on the map opposite together with the land now used as a car park by Martins Pond PH).

01/1967 – the remainder of The Green was conveyed to the Parish Council of Nettleden with Potten End by Benskin's Watford Brewery Ltd (in blue on the map opposite) in exchange for the area now used as a car park opposite Martins Pond PH (in white).

12/1980 – all The Green was registered as a Village Green under The Commons Act 1965.

11/2013 – The Village Green was registered with the Land Registry (Title Number HD529816).



3. Constraints on the Parish Council

The 1933 conveyance includes a covenant that The Council should ensure that the area marked in red in the map above should be kept *“unenclosed and will not at any time use or permit the same to be used for any other purpose other than as an open space for the use and recreation of the inhabitants of Potten End”*.

The 1967 conveyance includes a covenant that The Council should ensure that in the area marked in blue in the map above *“it will not carry on or suffer to be carried on the trade or business of a licensed victualler or manufacturer distiller blender brewer seller either wholesale or retail of wines beers or spirits or permit the same to be used as an off-license or for the purposes of a club in which excisable liquors are sold or consumed or otherwise for sale or consumption of intoxicating liquors not at any time to sell convey demise or let any part of the said property without obtaining from the Purchaser Lessee tenant or occupier a covenant to the same effect.”*

The Commons Act 1965 act states that “Town and village greens are open spaces that local inhabitants can use of *‘lawful sports and pastimes’*”. According to NALC¹, *“what constitutes ‘lawful sports and pastimes’ may vary from place to place”*.

The Inclosure Act 1857 and the Commons Act 1876 (apparently collectively referred to as the ‘Victorian Acts’) are still used to determine what use may be made of village greens.

S12 of the 1857 Act states that it is an offence *“if any person ... do any other act whatsoever to the injury of such town or village green or to the interruption of the use or enjoyment thereof as a place for exercise or recreation”*.

S29 of the 1876 Act states *“interference with or occupation of the soil thereof which is made otherwise than with a view to the better enjoyment of such town or village green or recreation ground shall be deemed a public nuisance”*.

NALC comment that *“it is not always easy to determine whether an activity amounts to an ‘interference’ or an ‘interruption’ or is for ‘the better enjoyment’ of a village green”*. They quote a ruling from R (on the Application of Laing Homes Limited) v Buckinghamshire County Council (2003)

¹ [LEGAL TOPIC NOTE 55 \(nalc.gov.uk\)](http://legal.topicnote55.nalc.gov.uk)

where the High Court stated that *“if a village green is established, any other use involving acts which would interrupt its use for enjoyment and recreation are effectively prohibited”*.

NALC takes the view that the holding of a fete is compatible with a village green but that general car parking (i.e. which is unrelated to the recreational use of a green) is not compatible. This has a slightly different emphasis to the guidance provided by the Open Spaces Society (OSS)² below but probably not sufficient to cause any concern.

The OSS has a section on vehicles driving and parking on open spaces³. It references s34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988⁴ which states that *“if without lawful authority a person drives a mechanically propelled vehicle (a) on to or upon any common land, moorland or land of any other description, not being land forming part of a road, or (b) on any road being a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway, he is guilty of an offence”*.

The OSS also state

4.14 Parking by local residents and shopkeepers and their visitors, employees and customers. This is not a legitimate use of any open space land, and it is unlawful in many cases and cannot be made lawful by being given planning permission. But this is the most difficult category of parking to deal with if you wish to avoid making enemies of your neighbours.

4.15 Parking in connection with the use of local establishments which seek to attract visitors, some more honourably than others (e.g. places of entertainment, clubs, public houses, restaurants, churches, museums, art galleries, libraries) in older premises without their own adequate parking space.

4.16 This must be opposed, but for occasional functions which are not likely to interfere with the proper use of the open space. In such a case, its owner may give special permission subject to appropriate conditions. Such a use must be for less than 28 days a year or planning permission is necessary.

4. Public Comments

25 residents have expressed their opinions by email - 17 have expressed concern, 8 have expressed support, and there have been a number of Facebook posts, mainly expressing support. The full texts of the emails (anonymised) have been included below.

Those expressing concern are primarily worried about permission, frequency, noise, speeding, dangerous driving and safety (primarily of drinkers on the pavement outside Martins Pond but also along Hempstead Lane). Many of those expressing concern aren't altogether opposed to the events taking place if better controls can be introduced.

Those expressing support emphasise the need for Martins Pond to be retained as a viable business in the village.

² [Open Spaces Society - Protecting Open Spaces Since 1865 \(oss.org.uk\)](http://oss.org.uk) The OSS claim to be Britain's oldest national conservation body, founded in 1865, which campaigns for stronger protection and opportunities for everyone to enjoy commons, greens and paths, defends open spaces against loss and pressures from development and assists local communities so that they can safeguard their green spaces for future generations to enjoy. 'Open Spaces' include Village Greens.

³ [Driving and parking on your local green space. \(oss.org.uk\)](http://oss.org.uk)

⁴ [Road Traffic Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

5. Other issues

The question of **off-site consumption of alcohol** sold by Martins Pond has been raised but this is allowed under the existing license.

Reference has been made to the use of The Green by the **funfair**. This is a longstanding arrangement which is allowable on Village Greens under the Victorian Acts. Permission is requested by the organiser in advance, proof of public indemnity insurance is provided and a rent paid.

Reference has been made to **Byelaws** adopted by the Parish Council with respect to the Village Green in 1951 under s8 (i) (d) of the Local Government Act 1894. There are a number of issues regarding these byelaws

- they can only apply to the area marked in red on the map above as the area marked in blue wasn't conveyed to the Parish Council until 1967.
- they appear to be in conflict with the 1933 covenant by referring to damage to fencing "enclosing the ground" (s3) which was expressly prohibited by that covenant.
- according to NALC⁵ the requirement in the byelaws that "*a person shall not on the ground wilfully obstruct, disturb, interrupt, or annoy any other person in the proper use of the ground*" (s9) has since been found invalid by the courts because it is too vague.
- Any attempt by officers of the council to remove anyone infringing the Byelaws (s11) may be regarded under current legislation as assault.
- According to NALC there is anecdotal evidence that police are reluctant to prosecute under byelaws.

The one statement in the Byelaws which remains relevant is that "*A person shall not except in the pursuance of a lawful agreement with the Council bring on to the ground ... any barrow, truck, machine or vehicle*" (s4.b) but this doesn't add anything to the restriction under the Traffic Act 1985.

6. Way forward

In the absence of approval from the Parish Council for the use of The Green it is clear that the bikers are in breach of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

The Council needs to take a view as to whether the use of The Green for biker's events is an act which would interrupt the use of The Green for enjoyment and recreation.

If the Council determines that the events would interrupt the enjoyment of The Green then the use of The Green as a car park needs to cease. That's not to say that bikers couldn't park legally on the surrounding streets and drink on The Green if alternative parking arrangements could be made, but this may not meet the requirements of the bikers.

If the Council determines that the events are "occasional functions" which do not interrupt the enjoyment of The Green, even if that is subject to conditions, then there needs to be a formal proposal from Martins Pond for the use of The Green. That proposal needs to cover inter alia start/finish times, frequency, insurance, traffic/crowd control, proposals to prevent damage to The Green in the event of wet weather, probably a rental. This is not dissimilar to the issues covered in the application form required by the Dacorum Event Safety Group⁶ for an event of this scale.

⁵ [LEGAL TOPIC NOTE 55 \(nalc.gov.uk\)](http://nalc.gov.uk)

⁶ [Dacorum Event Safety Group events and filming notification form](#)

Public comments

9th August – concern (resident A)

You may or may not be aware that Jude has organised a second bikers get together at Martins Pond pub tonight which has entailed a large portion of the village green been used as a parking lot for bikers.

Whilst in practice I don't have any problem with the village green been used as a recreational area for residents & visitors I think this is maybe going a bit too far.

There must be over 300 bikes parked or driving over the village green this evening.

I realise and hope these may be summertime events only but surely the Parish council should be approached to authorise the use of the village green for these events.

Also not sure on the licensing regulations about serving takeaway alcohol for consumption off the pub premises ie the pub and its parking area.

Food for thought

Ps I am all in favour of supporting pubs as much as possible.

9th August (20.45) – concern (resident A)

I am not trying to spoil peoples fun but I have already received complaints from my neighbours about the size of these gatherings & the noise revving engines & screeching tyres.

Some children are in bed already.

They are now leaving and some of them are burning up the roads at record speed.

The question to ask are:

1. Should the pub be allowed to use the "village green" for these regular events without permission from the PC. Especially when so many bikes are parking on the green itself!!

Also from a licensing point of view, I believe the law now states all alcoholic drinks sold by the pub need to be consumed on the Pub premises ie the car park and in the pub itself & not on the village green?

This is different to the Covid licensing laws that allowed pubs to serve takeaway alcohol drinks

I am not against the gatherings per se if they are infrequent but I fear this will not be case.

Up to the PC to debate.

23rd August (19:03) – concern (resident A)

There are more & more cars now parking on the village green in addition to the bikers.

If the PC is going to permit these events I am afraid someone will have to control these events if they are going to continue.

The village green will get damaged.

23rd August (19:47) - concern

The bikers are here again! and there's even more of them - word is getting around! There are also numerous cars parked ON the Village Green which is completely unacceptable. The bikes are being revved (it's like being in the pits at Silverstone), some are roaring along Hempstead Lane and Water End Road and they are certainly NOT doing 30mph! We already suffer from excessive traffic and speeding and this exacerbates it.

What happened to our quiet village? Certainly can't walk the dogs on the Green or have a quiet drink on this warm evening!

Did the Parish Council give consent for this? I remember back in the day when a local resident who was a supporter of a National charity asked if they could use the Village Green to start and finish a sponsored walk. Despite the worthy cause, the Parish Council did not agree to this as it was not a Parish/village event and the charity wasn't a local one.

Whilst I accept that Martins Pond PH needs to make money but this is really getting out of hand. I don't want to be a 'moaning minnie' but if this is going to grow like topsy, if it happens every fortnight, with cars now as well as bikes, together with the noise and general disturbance, then it becomes unacceptable to the residents. The Parish Council may wish to consider whether this is an acceptable use for the Village Green.

Off to get the ear plugs!

23rd August (19:53) – concern (resident B)

Perhaps school parents could park on it if everyone is turning a blind eye to this

23rd August (23:58) – concern (resident A)

The last few bikes left Martins pond at 23.56pm screaming down Hempstead lane at some stupid speed.

This is not acceptable to the residents of Hempstead lane and the village.

24th August (11:10) – concern

Assuming I'm not the only concerned resident in Potten End you may have already received correspondence regarding the titled subject matters

I attach below a link to The Drone and Model Aircraft Code

<https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-code/where-you-can-fly>

I wasn't aware I had given permission for the contents of my residential property, fields where I keep horses, associated equipment and building materials to be recorded via drone (with clear disregard to the drone code applicable to residential properties) and broadcast to all and sundry via YouTube.... that would be because I haven't

I wasn't aware the Village Green was an asset of Martins' Pond and for it to make use.... that would be because it isn't

I wasn't aware every three weeks the rules of the road are suspended, vehicles/motorbikes able to be parked on the Village Green, double yellow lines, ice cream vans parked across my driveway.... that would be because they aren't

I appreciate the Parish Council did not sit in August to give residents the chance to discuss these matters, however, despite this I feel if I had taken it upon myself to do any one of the above my collar would have been felt within minutes of doing so

To summarise, this situation (particularly the drone footage) is unacceptable, and I would appreciate Parish Council representations be made to Martins' Pond to have this footage taken down.... promptly!

24th August (12:58) - concern

We would like to register our concerns regarding the increasingly frequent events of 'biker BBQ's on the village green organised by the patrons of Martins Pond public house.

The vast number of bikers attending congregate on the green but also spill onto the road outside of the pub, blocking the path of cars. This dangerous practice will invariably cause a serious accident in the future. The bikers have sorties around the village lanes, often at excessive speed causing unnecessary risks to other road users. The noise created is unacceptable, especially late at night.

We appreciate the present need of the establishment to create business opportunities but the negative consequences suffered by our community are too serious to put up with on a regular basis. We believe a maximum of two events per year should be sanctioned, these being subject to a new set of rules which showed our local residents a greater degree of respect and safety.

24th August (12:38) – concern

I would be grateful if you are able to register my concerns regarding the biker events taking place at the martins pond pub. I have had no issue with the events over the last few weeks as the I believe they have been well managed events and short in duration. However yesterday evening was excessive in noise and disturbance to those who live around the green, dangerous driving around the green which basically became a high speed racetrack. As you are responsible for the village green, it would be prudent to take action now and ensure that you work with the pub to find a suitable way forward and avoid further complaints. Please acknowledge this email and confirm my details are not to be shared with any other party

24th August (13:12) - concern

Please accept this message as a notice that as a resident of one of the houses overlooking the village green, last nights Bikers BBQ was unacceptable in many ways and needs to be controlled or stopped.

1. 20 cars parked on the village green
2. Bikes & cars mounting the village green from all sides
3. Excessive noise from bikers revving up their engines for several minutes
- 4 off road bikes doing spins & wheelies on the village green
5. Bikes driving down the Common, Hempstead lane & little Heath lane in groups and with excessive speed breaking the speed limit

6. People standing in the road outside the pub obstructing traffic. We nearly called the police
 7. If the parking on the village green is not stopped now, others will think it is acceptable to pull up & park on the village green for quick school drop off etc & once the ground is wet the grass will get damaged.
 8. The last few bikes revved their engines & left screeching down Hempstead lane just before midnight almost certainly waking up many residents.
 9. Someone is going to get killed soon if nothing is done
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24th August (13:29) – concern (resident B)

I spoke to you about my concern about the above recently when you said that at that time that the Parish Council did not have a view.

This week another and larger meet was held and Jude has indicated on social media that she intends to carry on holding these events for as long as the weather holds.

Subject to the PC agreeing terms, once or twice a year is reasonable but every 2 weeks seems very excessive. Apparently Jude used to be a biker.

The village green is managed by the PC for the benefit of the "Residents of the Village" and while there were some locals present at these BBQ meetings it is mostly bikers from outside the village and local area that attend.

There seems to be no management of this event through the Parish Council whose permission should have been sought for use of The Green and last evening I understand that there were over 20 cars illegally parked on the village green. This sets a dangerous precedent as other people will feel it is okay to park on the village green when dropping off children at the school or when large events are happening at the Church hall or village hall.

Those close to The Green will have been disturbed by the revving of bikes and the racing of bikes down Hempstead Lane, The Green the Common & Little Heath lane, with us hearing the noise as far away as Vicarage Road.

I am also concerned about the possible illegal use of a drone for photographs put on social media, invading the privacy of residents around The Green.

I hear that some of the bikes were racing and achieving seriously high speeds and someone is going to get hurt. A police presence is needed.

An emergency meet of the Parish Council is clearly needed to discuss the adverse effects of these events on the village and in your absence on holiday hopefully the Chair will arrange this. Will you let me know what action will be taken please.

24th August (16:20) – concern

I wanted to send a quick note about the Biker Meets that have been taking place outside Martins Pond over the Summer.

I have no objection to the idea of groups gathering in the village and having a drink and a chat.

Having said that I am very concerned about the minority of people that are treating our village like a race track.

I live on Hempstead Lane and during each of these events there has been an incredible amount of noise and more concerning some very dangerous behaviour amongst a number of the participants.

People have been riding past our house at very fast speeds, riding on the wrong side of the road and their bikes are very loud. As I am sure you are aware, as it was impossible to miss last night, this went on from the start of the bike meet until late into the evening.

Last night we had friends visiting and they needed to pop out during the evening and were scared to leave our driveway in case one of the groups of bikes was going past at the time.

If a dog or cat or more importantly a child had been on the road last night it would have been an incredibly unsafe place to be.

As I said, I'm ok with people coming to the village, but it is our home and they should treat it like we do.

I was tempted to phone the police last night to complain as I am certain they would have caught a number of people driving without care and attention and speeding, although I suspect they would have not attended if I had called.

I appreciate that Martin's Pond cannot be held responsible for the behaviour of those visiting, but they seem to be making this into a regular event. If this is what we are expected to accept then I would like the Parish Council to consider what effect it is having on our lovely village and it's residents.

I would appreciate it if you can keep this communication anonymous.

24th August (18:38) – concern

I attach a couple of photos of the carnage on the Potten End Village Green yesterday which has occurred 3 times in the past 6 weeks and is, no doubt, set to continue at fortnightly intervals until the end of the summer. Notwithstanding the illegality of the parking, I would like to draw your attention to the antisocial aspects of such gatherings and the inherent danger to the general public. We were unable to enjoy the tranquillity of our own back garden again last night due to the noise of bikes revving, doing wheelies and racing each other down Hempstead Lane until very late in the evening and found ourselves taking our lives in hand when trying to walk our dog or pull out of our own driveway. Whilst we appreciate that Martin's Pond pub needs to find alternative revenue streams during these economically difficult times, we would sincerely like to believe that the Parish Council would see fit to intervene and regulate the frequency of such events and impose some sort of accountability by the pub for the antisocial behaviour of the attendees.

25th August (13:59) – concern

Just wanted to reach out with regards to the continued bikers events being held at Martins Pond. Given the proximity of our house to the pub this event has grown and grown to such an extent that the last event held was too large for the surrounding area.

I am all for businesses coming up with creative ideas to help bring in sources of income but having hundreds upon hundreds of bikes and cars parking on the green and constant revving of engines has become a bit ridiculous now. The speed and dangerous driving also is worrying given children around. Appreciate this may be the minority but this has become too big an event for such a small village.

The pub would be supported better if there was better interaction with the locals and focus on bringing good food and drink to the village (Plough and village shop testament to this).

The pub has a car park with allocated spaces for a reason to help restrict to capacity constraints, parking up on the green just shows the extent of how this event now has spiralled out of control.

25th August (16:09) - concern

We are writing to you to express our concerns regarding the repeated, and planned regular motor cyclist meetings at Martins Pond pub and the village green.

Our concerns relate to -

- the use of the village green by large numbers of non residents and resultant wear and tear damage on a resource intended for village residents use.
- the use of the village green for vehicle parking in non designated parking areas.
- the noise associated with several hundred motorbikes and their riders on a weekday evening, extending to as late as midnight.
- the spilling of people and their bikes across the road in front of the pub causing hazards to passing traffic and potential danger to those visiting the pub.
- the noise and danger associated with revellers leaving late in the evening, revving their bikes and performing " wheelies" on village roads.

We understand that the publican wishes to extend their business , but the current 2 weekly events are at significant cost and potential danger to their neighbours and co-residents of the village.

26th August (12:46) – concern

I'm sure that I'm merely adding to the chorus that will have sounded out on this matter, so I won't repeat the basic facts here.

I appreciate that Jude is working hard in trying to re-vitalise Martin's Pond after these recent difficult years for public houses and I was happy with the previous month's pub clientele of mainly lambretta/vespa riders who were polite, well ordered in their parking on The Green and in the surrounding roads, and appreciated their efforts in keeping noise to a reasonable level.

The bike meeting on 23rd August was another matter. I would estimate at least 250 bikers and others. Heavy 4-wheeled vehicles were parked on and along the eastern grass edge of The Green, even alongside the sign stating 'no parking'. If that behaviour is ignored it will likely encourage such parking at times of the year when the grass will sustain unsightly damage (as with construction company vehicles in the recent past). Whilst the majority of the pub's clients were fine, there was a significant number of others who were anti-social by high-revving their bikes (even when stationary) and in the copious instances of high speeding up and down the neighbouring roads - and noticeably, these were the bikes that had no, or inefficient, bafflers.

If this number of bikers and other vehicles increases without some measure of control there is the potential for an accident, let alone the considerable nuisance factor that went on late into the night. The air quality became obviously fummy. Houses around The Green have elderly and young residents who would have been trying to sleep, and some dogs were upset with the resultant barking added to the noise.

Can an appropriate authority be called on to monitor any such future events and to challenge individuals where behaviour is anti-social and road use is unlawful.

26th August (19:14) - support

Unfortunately I cannot attend the EGM but as one of the items on the agenda is Martins Pond Bikers Night but I want to voice my support for this initiative.

Post Covid every business has been through a difficult time, picking themselves up & finding new ways to attract customers back to revive their trade. The Bikers Night is something different, it is fantastic that it is looks to be successful & that is coming from a non-biker! It is bringing business to the village not just for Martins Pond but potentially for the village store & The Plough at other times.

I understand there are some concerns about noisy bikes arriving & leaving the village and bikes on the green which of course need to be addressed. However the green should be for the village to use so could I urge everyone involved, especially the Parish Council to be sympathetic & flexible in their approach to this matter. This is a new idea, introducing new people to the village bringing much needed trade, please embrace it & find a compromise for everyone.

27th August (12:32) - concern

Like a number of other residents, I am concerned at the increasingly frequent "biker BBQs" being held on the Green organised by the Manager of the Martins Pond Pub

These meetings of well over 150 "veteran" bikers with the addition of other younger riders on sports bikes are growing in size and frequency.

While it is gratifying to know that Martins Pond is presumably making a financial profit from this activity, it is at the cost of the villagers who have to repair and maintain the Green and have to suffer the noise of high revving motor bikes late at night.

I would be grateful if you would let me know:

- A] what is the Council charging the Manager for the use of the Green as we used to charge the Annual Fun Fair
- B] What instructions have been given to the Manager for the control of the numbers of bikes participating
- C] what are the instructions for the policing of the event to prevent cars parking on the Green and the performance of Wheelies by the younger participants
- D] what instructions have been given to control the quiet dispersal of the participants

E] what are the rules for commercial vans to be sited on the Green in order to trade

F] what instructions have been given for the frequency of these BBQ's

I understand that there is to be a meeting on the 6th September 2023 to discuss these points which I hope to attend in order to put these questions to the Council myself but if I am unable to attend, I would be grateful if you could put them to the Council at that meeting yourself

29th August (16:21) - support

I hold a monthly bike meet at my pub and the majority of the same bikers also attend the event at Martins Pond. The majority of the attendees are incredibly respectful. I am a biker myself and have had to deal with the sad stigma that attaches itself to our hobby. Sadly an incredibly small minority ruin it for everyone. Just like people may speed when exiting a pub car park/someone's drive or just driving through potten end, the pub should not be held responsible for this. It is people's own decision whether they speed. Considering the huge numbers that attend this event, it is only 1/2% that may speed off. This should not be the reason that the event is cancelled. It's like suggesting the pub be closed because 1/2 people may speed out of the car park and annoy the neighbours? The bikers are also mostly gone by 9pm. No other event would guarantee that. Live music can go on until midnight for example, which is much less respectful. As landlords we have to diversify and put on various events to keep our doors open. To give you an example - The monthly bike meet at the village swan pays my monthly rent. No other event does that for me. It's not even an event that continues throughout the whole year, but it absolutely helps. If anything would to happen which would stop my event, I would need to consider alternative events that may not be as successful.

Please get behind this event and support your local pub. It may not be there for much longer.

29th August (19:55) - support

I wanted to get in touch to give my support to our local pub and to say that the green is a community space for all to use and I will personally ensure that this space is continued to be used for bike meets with or without the pubs involvement. It is a communal space and will be used accordingly. I have access to tens of biker groups who would give me their support resulting in significant numbers of bikers attending.

You really ought to consider yourselves lucky that currently some one is responsible for the organisation.

29th August (22:13) – support

I believe the parish council are holding an Extraordinary General Meeting on Wednesday, 6th September, at 7:30pm, at the Church Room, to discuss concerns associated with fortnightly large events at Martins Pond. I would like my support of the events to go on record.

With regards to the motorcycle meets, as usual with so many of these things it is a tiny minority who are upsetting an otherwise well managed and pleasant event by arriving and departing in a boorish manner. The organisers and 99% of the attendees are acutely aware of local sensitivities and are communicating with all participants through social media and club channels to reinforce the need to arrive and depart as quietly as possible and take responsibility. The village green is a community

space which by virtue of its extending directly off the pub car park provides a perfect spill over for attendees.

The pub owners and organisers take great care to clean up after and prevent any bad behaviour, preferring the event to be a place where all visitors young and old can come and enjoy the wide range of wonderful machines and talk to the owners about their passion.

As a side note, I hope these events provide what I'm sure is much needed financial support to the local pub, a place which if kept viable will maintain for the village a much loved and needed historic centrepiece to village life for years to come. It fills me with dread to think how many local pubs, especially since Covid are open perhaps only a couple of days a week just to survive. As for the motorcyclists it should probably be worth mentioning that for obvious reasons the consumption of large quantities of alcohol is not part of the deal, so that's a blessing.

30th August (07:14) – support

I'm not sure I'll be able to make the meeting later as I'm away on business. So, I thought I'd write instead to express my support for the bike meets at Martins Pond.

I live on Water End Road and there have been a few instances of people driving too fast along there after the meets, but I'm sure it's something that can be worked on. Perhaps Martins Pond could try the idea of a "courtesy zone" of a mile in all directions, when bikers drive particularly slowly and quietly?

Just a thought.

30th August (08:25) - support

I would like to thank Martins on the Pond Public House in partnership with Berkhamsted and Tring motorcycle group for hosting such fantastic fortnightly motorcycle meets.

Without doubt this has brought new business to the Pub and given the current economic situation a welcome boost to the village, assured that they have gained new customers that otherwise would have been unaware of such a great venue to dine.

I have attended three of the meets that have built in popularity not just with local motorcycle owners, but has been good to see a large number of local residents enjoying the meeting.

The meets have been well organised and it is pleasing to see public spaces being used to the benefit of patrons to the pub.

I am a retired Police Officer, with 30 years' service and raise the fact that the events have been held with the minimum of disturbance to local residents or impact on the environment.

I look forward to attending meetings in the future and the organisers receiving the full support of the Local Parish Council.

30th August (11:35) - support

Regarding the bike meet at the Martins Pond I'd like to say that I support this event. I also do understand some of the negative issues raised by some.

Of course I know the land is owned by the PC and they have a responsibility to look after it and how it's used. But I really hope they can work with the Martins Pond to allow this event to continue. I really enjoyed the evening, most had gone by the time I left and I was back home in pj's by 9pm!

31st August (14:29) - support

So a few (very few) make a bit of noise or act like an idiot, these individuals are then informed when they turn up again to behave or leave, that's their choices, the majority of us will not put up with bad behaviour, we just want to meet fellow bikers and chat about bikes and admire each others rides.

This meet is creating alot of revenue for a village pub that during these dark times needs all the help it can get, why risk the loss of yet another hospitality area for the sake of a few villagers who don't even use it?

We are people who own bikes, we arent bad people regardless of what the media portray us as.

We have seen residents joining us, chatting, looking at the bikes and asking questions, it's clean and tidy afterwards as we arent messy, in fact we create more revenue and less mess than the horrible fairground that's there every year churning the ground up and risking peoples lives with their god awful rides.

With a bit of support and some local business ideas it can only be a good thing, local produce stalls, scout BBQ, get the village shop involved too.

Instead of thinking it's a bad bunch of people on the green, see it as a business adventure.

31st August (by hand) – concern

We are writing to register our concern at the scale and frequency of the bike meet at Martins Pond. The bikers are now so populous on the Green that they have become a nuisance and source of resentment due to their lack of consideration especially later on in the evenings toward adjoining neighbours and their entrances, as well as the sheer volume through the village.

If an event like this was once or twice a year it would be tolerable but just expecting it to die back as the nights draw in is only postponing an inevitable increase next spring.

We wish the pub well but it is now getting out of control.

2nd September (10:04) – concern

I saw the post regarding the PC EGM next Wednesday evening. Unfortunately, ... and I will be unable to attend.

I wondered if I might be allowed to contribute a comment via email to be read out at the meeting?

In principle ... I have no objection to the bike meetings being held. We understand these are popular events that bring much-needed revenue to the pub.

However, we are deeply concerned at the speed at which many of these bikes are travelling through the village and past our house. Some are clearly doing speeds in excess of 60mph in a 30 mph zone.

While not the majority of attendees, a significant minority are breaking the speed limit placing our children and other pedestrians at risk. Should this continue, we will ask the local Police to set a speed trap at the start and end times of these events. If Martin's Pond cannot control the behaviour of these riders, we will no longer feel able to support these events and will campaign for them to be stopped.

2nd September (12:17) – concern

As I'm sure you are aware, there has been much resistance from various villagers against a regularly occurring biker event at the Martins Pond pub.

Although we appreciate the pub needs to remain commercially viable, it can not do so to the detriment of the wellbeing of the residents and regrettably, we feel that the impact of previous biker events has been highly negative. From bikers racing up and down Hempstead Lane to revving of engines and speeding are clearly not in keeping with the character of a residential area.

I understand there is an extraordinary PC meeting this Wednesday and if possible I will try to attend but work commitments may interfere hence I would like to express my views which are that both frequency, size and impact of the biker event are not in keeping with the character of the village.

6th September (9.25) – concern

We cannot attend the parish council Extraordinary General Meeting this evening due to an event at our sons school, so we wanted to send our comments via email.

We are residents of Fields End, bordering Boxted Road which runs up into Potten End.

We very strongly oppose Martin's Ponds bike meet as the noise and fume pollution from this event is just abhorrent where we live.

We completely disagree with the statement on their Facebook page that 99% of their attendees are courteous and careful about noise and their affect on local residents. We would not be so unhappy if this was the case.

On the bike meet evenings the bikes leave the final roundabout as you leave Hemel Hempstead on Boxted Road and race up to Potten End. The majority if not all the bikes did this on the last meet. We understand pubs are struggling, but this is miserable to think this will be a regular occurrence. Unable to use our garden or get our child get to sleep.

We are not the only residents of Fields End to feel like this. I have copied in our local councillor, Fiona Guest, so she is aware that this is a big issue for us.

We hope our voices will be heard in the meeting later today.

6th September (10:51) – concern

I would like to say the noise and disturbance is huge to our village community and not suitable for us or our pets.
